

DFS QUARTERLY

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FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Update

Thanks to an additional \$210 million in emergency spending approved by Congress late last year, a total of \$360 million is available for the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program in FY 2002. The Final Rule, which outlines every aspect of the program, will be published in the Federal Register. However, the following information is known about this year's grant program:

Applications will be accepted between March 1 and April 1, 2002. The maximum grant size remains at \$750,000. Although paper applications will still be available, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) is strongly encouraging departments to use the electronic application filing process, which will be very user-friendly. While filling out the application on-line,

there will be help buttons available and access to frequently asked questions. Fire department based EMS is a new category this year, joining firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), training, fire prevention, fitness or wellness, and vehicles. Although fire departments will be limited to submitting only one application this year, a new approach will allow applicants to request funding in various combinations of activities in one of the four distinct functional program areas. These areas are Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety Programs, Fire Prevention Programs, Emergency Medical Services Programs, and a Firefighting Vehicles Program.

Following application submission in March, the schedule is for peer review

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From the Desk of the Fire Marshal

Stephen D. Coan

When I was first appointed State Fire Marshal, one of my goals was to transition Massachusetts from a homegrown fire code to the adoption of a national model code. Initially, there was no national model code strong enough to consider substituting for the 527 Code of Massachusetts Regulations promulgated since the 1940s by the Board of Fire Prevention Regulations.

Towards this goal, the Model Fire Code Committee was established consisting of members of the fire service involved in enforcing the fire prevention regulations at the local level and technical staff in the Office of the State Fire Marshal, to investigate and review national fire codes. After extensive research, the committee recommended to the Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (BFPR) that they move towards the adoption of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1, 2003 edition. NFPA 1 will be the skeleton for the Massachusetts fire code upon which the Board will build sections that it believes are important to maintain the level of fire protection our citizens have come to expect. The long-term goal is to make it easier for everyone to use, both the regulators and the regulated communities. Recently the BFPR concurred with the Model Fire Code Committee's recommendation and voted to start the process of making the transition to NFPA 1 as the basis for the Massachusetts fire code. As the Board and the Committee move

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Federal FIRE Act Grant Writing Workshops

The Department of Fire Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will conduct six workshops for fire departments requiring assistance with applications for funding under the next round of the federal FIRE Act. Mr. Robert Waters, FEMA Region 1, will explain in detail the application procedure and time lines for preparation and submission. Pre-registration is required and walk-ins will not be accommodated. To register, call (978) 567-3242 and you will be walked through the prompts. ♦

Date	Location	Time
Feb. 21	DFS/Stow	1-4 p.m.
Feb. 21	DFS/Stow	7-10 p.m.
Feb. 26	DFS/Northampton	1-4 p.m.
Feb. 26	DFS/Northampton	7-10 p.m.
Mar. 7	Plymouth	9 a.m. – 12 n
Mar. 7	Middleton	7-10 p.m.

From the Fire Marshal

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forward on this process, they will be seeking input from the fire service. If there are specific subject matters that should be included in the new code, please advise the committee.

BPRS

Concurrent with the process at the Board of Fire Prevention Regulations to transition to a model code, the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BPRS) is engaged in a similar process to adopt the seventh edition of the building code. Tim Rodrique serves as the designee for my seat on the BPRS. Chief Keith Hoyle of Amherst sits on the Board as the representative from the Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts. They will participate in the BPRS process and monitor the revision of this code.

Code Conflict Resolution

These boards need to coordinate their work around the issues of administrative authority and enforcement responsibility. In order to avoid the risk of creating code conflicts. Such conflicts are a nightmare for those charged with enforcing the codes at the local level and those regulated by the codes. The chairperson of the Board of Fire Prevention Regulations and I have written to the chairperson of the Board of Building Regulations and Standards asking for a joint review of all administrative sections of both these codes. We also requested a commitment that a review would be performed on any code that may cause conflict for regulators prior to any code adoption. They have indicated a willingness to meet and discuss the issue.

Stow Building Project Update

The architectural firm Wallace Floyd has been hired for the new building project at Stow. Several meetings with DFS staff have taken place for the study and initial plan development stage. We are waiting for final approval by the Legislature for the \$25 million

capital bond to move this project into the next stage.

SATURN

Since September 11, Executive Office of Public Safety (EOPS) agency heads, the Governor's senior staff and Richard Swenson, the Commonwealth's Security Director, have continued to meet regularly to coordinate anti-terrorism efforts statewide. Secretary Jajuga sees local public safety officials as the front-line defense against terrorism. To support local public safety agencies, the group has created the Statewide Anti-Terrorism Unified Response Network or SATURN. As part of SATURN, the Department of Fire Services through the Mass. Firefighting Academy has proposed various training programs and is working on developing and delivering them in the next couple of months. ♦

FPAM 16th Annual Seminar

April 23-25, 2002

The Fire Prevention Association of Massachusetts is holding its 16th Annual Seminar April 23-25, 2002. It will be held at the Campus Center Hotel, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The registration deadline is April 8, 2002.

On Tuesday, April 23 topics to be covered include: Living with Fire; CMR 8 Inspections; Code Enforcement Procedures; Pension Maximization; Understanding Cultural Diversity; and Blasting.

Wednesday, April 24 is vendor day and presentations will include: the NFPA Report on the World Trade Center Bombings and fire protection systems with various topics on various levels with something for the new and experienced fire inspector.

The Association's Annual Banquet will take place the evening of April 24.

Thursday, April 25 will include

presentations by members of the New England Chapter of Fire Protection Engineers.

For more information or conference registration materials, contact: Barbara Stone, Seminar Chairperson, Hanover Fire Department 781-826-3151 or e-mail Hanover519@aol.com or e-mail Mike Swain at mjswain@ehs.umass.edu. ♦

Congressional Fire Services Institute

The Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) is proud to announce the theme of the 14th Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner and Seminars to be held April 18, 2002. The theme of this year's dinner is, "Protecting Our Nation." In part this theme was inspired by the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

In its fourteenth year, the Fire and Emergency Services Dinner is the annual fundraising event for the Congressional Fire Services Institute. A day of seminars on Capitol Hill, covering such topics as current legislation and the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program that culminates in a dinner and annual tribute at the Hilton Washington and Towers, located in Washington D.C. This year's dinner promises to be a spectacular event attended by congressional leaders and fire service leaders from around the country. Registration has already begun for the dinner, and attendance is expected to be at an all-time high. For more information about CFSI, or the dinner and seminar activities, please visit www.cfsi.org or contact Jori Wilmoth, Director of Events, at (202) 371-1277. ♦

Fire Investigations Lead to Code Compliance Actions

Fraternities Cited for Disabling Fire Alarms

On Friday, October 5, 2001 at 2:15 p.m., a fire broke out on the first floor of the Delta Upsilon fraternity house near the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus. Firefighters arrived on scene within three minutes of the alarm and found heavy fire showing on the first floor extending to the second and third floors of the wood frame structure. The structure, valued at over \$350,000 was destroyed in the blaze. Over two dozen-fraternity members were left homeless, and several firefighters were treated for heat exhaustion.

During overhaul, firefighters found a number of smoke detectors covered with plastic bags. Trooper Frank Hart of the Fire Investigation Unit/West Team as well as Compliance Officer Dave Beaudin of the Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit responded. Trooper Hart in cooperation with the Amherst Police and Fire Departments determined the cause of the fire to be unintentional when a “jar” type candle was inadvertently covered with bedding. Compliance Officer Beaudin and Amherst Assistant Chiefs Mike Zlogar, and Lindsey Strongren conducted an investigation into the covered smoke detectors. It was determined that every smoke detector in the house had been covered with a

plastic bag and duct tape. Several occupants indicated that this was “to prevent the fire department from coming to false alarms when there were big parties.” Private companies remotely monitor the fire alarm systems in all fraternities in Amherst.

According to Fire Chief Keith Hoyle, the covered smoke detectors significantly delayed fire department notification. Hoyle has said that had the fire occurred at 2 a.m., rather than 2 p.m., the outcome would have been tragic. Consequently, Chief Hoyle ordered an immediate inspection of all fraternities. These inspections turned up two more fraternities with covered smoke detectors.

Because of the investigation and inspections, criminal charges were filed against the three fraternities in the Western Division of the Housing Court for violating Mass. General Law c148, s27A, disabling a fire protection system without a permit. The cases against Delta Upsilon and Phi Mu Delta were resolved through an out of court settlement in which the fraternities shall cease tampering with fire protection systems. They have acknowledged the seriousness of their actions and must implement mandatory fire safety education and inspection programs as well as public fire safety education programs. Charges against Lambda Chi Alpha will be

heard in early February.

Investigation Reveals Danger from Improper Fireplace Installation

On December 9, 2001, a fire occurred in an occupied residential condominium unit in Amherst. Trooper Frank Hart of the Fire Investigation Unit’s West Team and Amherst Firefighter Lawrence Tebo conducted the investigation. Their investigation pointed to a factory-built fireplace as being the area of origin. Compliance Officer Dave Beaudin of the Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit was requested to assist. Building Commissioner Bill Start of the Amherst Inspection Services Department obtained and provided investigators with copies of the manufacturer’s installation instructions for the factory-built fireplaces. Inspection of several other fireplaces within the condominium complex revealed that some of the fireplaces were installed improperly and others may have been modified when condo units were renovated.

These findings were forwarded to Commissioner Start who promptly notified in writing all owners and occupants of the potential fire hazards associated with the improper installation of fireplaces, and advised them to have the units inspected by a qualified installer prior to using them. ♦

DFS Building Expansion Update

The DFS expansion project continues to show progress despite the present budget conditions. The architectural firm of Wallace Floyd has been hired by the Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) to complete the study documents. This is the next step in advancing to final construction drawings. The first meetings with Wallace Floyd took place at the end of January in Stow and Boston.

At present the scope of the project will include additional land procurement on both sides of the present campus, a new water system, a new sewer system additional administrative quarters, additional classroom and training space, a warehouse facility, a new cafeteria, a new 50-bed dormitory, and removal of all temporary facilities.

The legislation to fund this project with an anticipated cost of \$25 million

is presently before the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. Hopefully, it will be reported out of committee favorably before the end of the session. If that happens then we could proceed to the development of construction drawings and ultimately, commence construction. ♦

Voluntary Compliance of State Fire Code in State Owned Buildings

On January 7, 2002, State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan issued the following advisory to all heads of Fire Departments/Fire District.

It has come to my attention that some departments believe they no longer may inspect or advise state agencies on the conditions in state-owned buildings, as a result of the Attorney General's opinion (No. 00/01) dated October 30, 2000.

The Attorney General opined that provision of c148, and 527 CMR could not be enforced against the Commonwealth. This decision was based upon a review of the statute's construction, which led to the conclusion that the Commonwealth and its agencies, absent an explicit legislative directive, is immune from proscriptions set forth in statutes enacted by the Legislature.

Although the Attorney General opined the state and its agencies could not be subjected to enforcement, he clearly stated that nothing in his opinion barred officials controlling state buildings from voluntary compliance with the state fire code. Accordingly, the State Fire Marshal reminded fire officials that they are free to work with state officials to voluntarily obtain compliance in state-owned buildings. Such cooperation would service the best interest of the state in protecting its employees and invitees and the fire department in minimizing fire hazards, enhancing firefighter safety and allowing for pre-planning. ♦

Federal FIRE Act Grants

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of the applications in April, final decisions in May and grant award announcements beginning in June.

A 10% match will be required of fire departments that serve populations of under 50,000. A 30% match will be required for all departments protecting over 50,000 population.

Departments will be able to apply on-line at: www.usfa.fema.gov/grants.

For more information on the grant program, call toll-free 1-866-274-0960 or send an e-mail to usfagrants@fema.gov. In the meantime, departments are encouraged to:

- Determine what they are going to apply for and get bids.
- Seek out grant-writing assistance.

2002 Program Schedule

Late January	Federal Register notice published
March 1	Applications available on-line
March 31	Deadline for applications
April 15	Panel Reviews begin
May 3	Last panel review ends
Mid-May	FEMA begins awarding grants

MFA Hosts Federal Grant Writing Seminars

Grant writing seminars have been scheduled on February 21, February 26, and March 7 by the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy. The purpose of these workshops will be to explain the 2002 USFA grant program and the application process. Check the MFA website at www.state.ma.us/dfs/courses/mfacourses.htm under *Federal Grant Writing Workshop* for more information. ♦

MFA District Delivery Course Planning Sessions

Members of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy management staff will meet with district training committees during the month of April 2002 to disseminate information and plan course deliveries for the fall 2002 training semester.

If your department would like to host a fall 2002 semester, now is the time to communicate your wishes to your district training committee. Your request should be in the hands of the training committee chairman prior to the planning meeting to ensure that it gets the consideration of the committee.

A list of training committee chairman can be found in the latest Department of Fire Services' *Directory of Services*, or you may call Mary Shutts, Program Scheduler at 978-567-3205 if you need assistance locating this information. ♦

Propane Tank Recycling

Tank Recyclers, a division of TYS, Inc. recycles and re-certifies old grill tanks for return to the marketplace. If you have 100 or more 20 lb. LP tanks, they will pick them up from your location for free.

Additional Pickup Services:

20 lb. grill tanks (<100) \$3 each

1 lb. tanks \$1 each*

100 lb. tanks \$20 each*

*Space permitting

Contact: Michael J. Gray
(888) 445-0579, Ext. 2145 (Voice Mail) (401) 258-9800 Direct Line
mgray728@home.com ♦



Explosive Users Certificates

The Office of the State Fire Marshal would like to remind all fire departments that 527 CMR 13.04(11)(a) requires the requesting party must exhibit both a *Certificate of Competency* and an *Explosive Users Certificate* prior to issuing a *Use and Handling Permit* (Permit).

The Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit has found several instances where permits were issued to persons and or companies that did not possess a valid *Explosives Users Certificate*. If you have any questions, please call the Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3375 or in Western Massachusetts at 413-587-3181. ♦

Blast Site Explosives Security

While security and accounting of explosives, has always been an important issue, in recent months it has reached a new level of importance. In review, there are several steps that a blasting contractor must go through in order to properly account for and secure explosives.

From the point of purchase the explosive materials must be accounted for and secured until consumed in the blasting operation. Once explosives have been purchased, whether stored in the blasting contractor's own magazines or the supplier's, the blasting contractor must account for his inventory. During the transport phase of use, the contractor must maintain a trip manifest to document the explosives in transit. And then once the explosive materials have been used, the contractor must make a final accounting through his blasting log.

A number of fire departments are posting details on blast sites and there are several points worth revisiting on

the topic. Upon arrival at the blast site, there should be several things in place relative to security and accounting for explosives. The vehicle making delivery to the site should have met all the relative DOT requirements for transport of explosives. This would include paperwork to document what is on the truck and a storage magazine that meets the regulatory requirements for transportation. Should the explosives be delivered to the site without the delivery vehicle staying, then there needs to be either a storage magazine, known as a "day box", or another vehicle meeting DOT requirements for the explosives to be transferred into.

At all times while the explosives are in transit or are present on the blast site they need to be "attended". For the purpose of 527 CMR 13.00 attended is defined as:

"...the driver or attendant is physically on or in the vehicle or has the vehicle within his or her field of vision and can reach it quickly and with no interference. 'Attended' also means that the driver or attendant is awake, alert, and not engaged in other duties or activities that may divert attention from the vehicle.

Note: Necessary communication with public officers or representatives of the shipper, carrier, or consignee and necessary absence from the vehicle to obtain food or provide for physical comfort does not violate this requirement if such communication or absence complies with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations."

The same applies to "day boxes" on the site. The boxes must be secure and "attended" by the blasting crew.

Once the blasting operation has begun, a licensed blaster must be present to either conduct the blasting operation or directly supervise the operation. While it is necessary for explosives to be present on the immediate blast site, all excess explosives must be main-

tained in proper storage containers. Many blasting operations conduct multiple blasts during the course of the day. In between these blasts, all excess explosives must be secured in their proper containers.

Access to a blasting site must be limited to only the immediate blasting crew. While this is ultimately the responsibility of the licensed blaster, it is not unreasonable to question who is on the blasting crew and who is not. With the nature of today's construction projects, there can be multiple "trades" working on the same site at the same time. Excavators, concrete crews, carpenters, and steel workers are just a few of the trades that are working concurrently with blasting operations these days. Curiosity is always a factor in these situations. Blasters are typically sensitive to, and should be aware of who is on their blast site. When people look out of place, it is time to ask questions.

Post-blast is an equally critical time in the blasting operation. This is where the final accounting of explosives takes place. The blaster knows what he brought or had delivered to the site, and at this point should be aware of what was used in the blast(s). The final accounting of explosives is represented through the blasting log. The blasting log is a critical document that allows the blaster to record all the data relative to how the blast was designed, how much explosives went into it and what the results of the blast were. This is a point where the accounting aspect of the operation should come to a close. The inventory record, trip manifest and the blasting log should reconcile. Those explosives that were purchased for the blasting operation should now be totally accounted for as consumed. The excess explosives not consumed in the blasting operation are returned to the permanent storage facility where their inventory is maintained. While

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Blast Site Security

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the inventory records aren't available on the blasting site, the other two critical documents are: the trip manifest and the blasting log which should match up at this point.

A final post blast point of interest is related to housekeeping. Empty packaging containers; bags and boxes; that previously contained explosives must be either destroyed by burning on the site, or removed to a location where they can be burned. This can be a problem for some blasting operations where the work is taking place for utility work in the middle of the street. In these types of conditions, the supplier of the explosives will need to participate in the disposal of these containers. Whenever possible, it is best to destroy these containers on the site.

The housekeeping issue also relates to some of the initiation components of the blasting operation. There are several variations of non-electric initiation systems in use by blasting contractors today. These systems are comprised of plastic tubing and have "miniature" detonators attached to one or both ends. Much of this system "resides" on the surface of the blast. While the system is extremely reliable, there is always "residue" left in the form of spent tubing and attached initiators. Assuming there have been no misfires, these leftovers are harmless. The untrained eye could easily misinterpret them as being "live". This is where the housekeeping issue comes into play. When blasting operations have been conducted that utilize these types of initiation systems, the blasting contractor must retrieve as much of the leftovers as is possible. It is understood that some of these materials get buried by the blast and are not immediately retrievable. There have been instances where some of these spent components have been picked up by curious onlookers and mistaken for live blasting caps. The nature of these components is such that they do their

work, but the bulk of the system remains as residue. Keep in mind that electric initiation systems do not fall into this category. While copper wire may be present after the blast there are no other surface components of the system that could be picked up and misinterpreted as being live.

In any case where this is a question regarding a blasting operation being in compliance, feel free to call the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit or Technical Services at either (978) 567-3300 or in Western Mass. (413) 587-3181. ♦

Fueling Cars with Motor Running

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has received a number of phone calls, e-mails and letters regarding the fueling of motor vehicles. A memorandum was sent to local fire chiefs to remind them that fueling while a motor vehicle is running is a violation of 527 CMR 5.08(1). The complaints currently being received are referred to the appropriate fire department for any necessary action.

It is also important to remember that when filling containers to fuel your snow blower or recreational vehicle, the container must be on the ground, not in the trunk of the car or the truck bed. ♦

Blocked Exits

Inquiries have also been received concerning the placement or storage of combustible or flammable materials in any portion of an exit unless enclosed or protected in accordance with the State Building Code. This would include seasonal items such as trees, wreaths, hay bales and cornstalks, bundled firewood, and charcoal. 527 CMR 10.03(13)(b) further indicates that the storage and placement of these materials shall be located so that the presence or burning of the materials would not obstruct or render hazardous the means of egress.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3300 or at our Western MA office at 413-587-3181. ♦

Licensing Exams

All licensing exams will be given at the Department of Fire Services, Stow campus, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The same exams are given on the same dates, at the same times at the western Massachusetts office of the Department of Fire Services, One Prince Street, Northampton.

Fireworks

Mar. 13, 2002 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. in Room 502

Fire Extinguishers

Apr. 3, 2002 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. in the Auditorium

Blasting

Apr. 9, 2002 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in Room 502

The Office of the State Fire Marshal issues licenses to people and companies engaged in fireworks, blasting, explosives, cannon and mortar firing, special effects, special hazard systems and portable fire extinguishers. Information on applications and exam dates to obtain new licenses or to renew existing licenses may be obtained by contacting Joanne Melanson, at (978) 567-3700. Examinations for licenses are held quarterly. ♦

Status Report of Compliance/Enforcement Actions

The following is a status report of compliance and enforcement actions taken by the Office of the State Fire Marshal against individuals or companies for violations of MGL Chap. 148 and 527 CMR. The time frame for this report covers events during late 2000 through early 2002.

The status of the action is provided and notation is made regarding reinstatement. While other actions may be pending, only those individuals or companies who have had hearings with decisions rendered will be documented in this space.

Should there be any question regarding the status of any license or certificate please call the Office of the State Fire Marshal at any time for verification. The Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit or Technical Services can be reached at either (978) 567-3300 or in Western Mass. (413) 587-3181. ♦

Compliance/Enforcement Actions By The Department of Fire Services

Name	Action	Effective Date
Blasting Certificate of Competency		
Ray Lizott	Revoked	
Kevin MacDonald	Suspended Five Years	Effective 4/9/01
Patrick O'Conner	Suspended Two Years	Effective 12/14/00
Vance Demoranville	Suspended Four Months	Effective 12/20/01
Robert Stone	Suspended Six Months	Effective 9/18/01
Charlie Despotopoulos	Suspended One Year	Effective 11/9/01
Frank Kenefick	Suspended Three Years	Effective 6/14/01
Harlan Bean	Suspended Two Years	Effective 12/20/01
Explosives User's Certificate		
Exquisite Craft Development	Suspended Five Years	Effective 4/9/01
Granite Rock Drilling & Blasting	Revoked	
Hemphill Drilling & Blasting	Suspended Pending ATF Audit	
Cynjo Corp.	Suspended Three Years	Effective 10/30/01
CD Explosives	Suspended Three Years	Effective 11/19/01
Pioneer Supply	Suspended Six Months	Effective 1/25/02
Fireworks Certificate of Competency		
Brian Savage	Suspended Six Months	Effective 10/23/01
Fireworks User's Certificate		
Alonzo Fireworks Display, Inc.	Suspended Ten Months	Effective 9/1/01
Bay Fireworks	Suspension Served - Reinstated	

Hanging and Bracing of Fire Sprinkler Systems

By George Von Gnatensky, Tolco Inc. Vice President

Reprinted and edited with permission from *Fire Protection Contractor*, January, 2002 issue.

The pipe hanging system is critical to the performance of an automatic fire sprinkler system. It becomes even more so in areas subject to earthquakes because of the additional forces applied under these extreme conditions.

Local authorities having jurisdiction (AHJs), insurance companies and design engineers are now giving more serious attention to this subject.

Hangers, or hangers and bracing, when installed properly provide the sustained assurance that the system will remain in its intended position to provide the protection for which it was designed. This article outlines some commonly seen problems.

Hanging

- Inadequate fastener connections being made to the building structure. NFPA 13 furnishes fastener tables and Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) has tested optional fasteners without reducing the required safety factor. Check the current manufacturers' engineering sheets for proper use of fasteners.
- Beam clamps, which carry a specific torque requirement, are not being properly installed. Malleable cast clamps are a notable example. When was the last time you saw an installer using a torque wrench? Check the manufacturers' literature. A solution to this problem is the all steel beam clamp, that is manufactured from cold rolled carbon steel which by its very construction does not crack even under severe over tightening of the set screw. (Fig. 65).
- CPVC Installations: This invaluable new product has made affordable more fire sprinkler

systems, but it also presents unique hanging problems.

Hanger vs. Restraint - What is the difference?

A correctly installed system requires the use of both hangers and restraints.

A hanger for CPVC UL listing must meet a minimum safety factor without failure- defined by UL as not pulling away from the structure.

A restraint for CPVC UL listing must additionally satisfy a more severe criterion by not allowing deformation to occur. It should restrain the sprinkler head from reverse movement during head activation, such as a sprinkler being forced above the ceiling and away from the fire source. A commonly seen problem is the generic offset type hanger used for CPVC, a use contrary to its listing. It is listed as a hanger for this purpose but not as a restraint. Study the manufacturers' literature and restrictions. If you have any doubts on this critical issue ask for a written substantiation. A solution to this problem is using a stand off hanger that converts to a hanger / restraint combination when required.

Earthquake Bracing

- A bracing system, no matter how well designed, is only as good as it is installed. Therein lies the issue of verification of proper installation by both the installer and the reviewing inspector.

A specific torque requirement, as in the case of the malleable beam clamps, is often an issue. Torquing bolts to a precise level without benefit of a torque wrench is all but impossible. UL may approve a specific torque-reliant attachment, but will assume the fitter and/or inspector will have the means for this sensitive torque evaluation and passes the responsibility. My company doesn't agree with this transfer of

responsibility and has made it a priority to provide a visual verification feature in all of its bracing components. Flattened leaf springs, bolt heads that break off or large flat steel components that must touch are innovations that provide this important assurance.

Beware of bracing attachments where you are made responsible for a torque specific product installation. Read the manufacturers' literature.

Bracing to Open Web Steel Trusses

Attaching, locating and transferring seismic loads to this type of structure presents another set of problems. Per structural analysis, only the outer third of these structural members are designed to permit the greatest loads. A vertical bolt attachment through the top panel opening is not a secure connection. Drilling through the angles of the top panel compromises the structure and is not permitted by the truss manufacturer. Drilling through the optional wood nailer transfers the seismic load to a transitional member instead of the structure. Welded studs are a good method of connecting bracing to the top, but often the required surface preparation is lacking and verification is nearly impossible.

My company worked closely with the largest manufacturer of open web steel trusses to develop UL listed bracing attachment devices that do not compromise the integrity of the structure while providing a superior connection capability. As with all of our bracing attachments, these devices provide immediate verification of proper installation.

UL and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13 committee worked to establish reliable design loads for all bracing components under the requirements of the UL 203 A

guidelines. These design loads are shown for horizontal orientation only. NFPA 13 (1999 edition) Table 6-4.5.10 provides for factors to reduce the published horizontal loads for brace angles at less than 90 degrees from vertical. This required reduction of bracing loads is often misunderstood and overlooked.

Fastener attachment components of a brace present another challenge. NFPA 13 (1999 edition) Table 6-4.5.9 shows the appropriate fasteners for use under various conditions and brace orientations. Notably, the tables carry this restriction for usage: "These values are based on concentric loading of the fastener."

Any eccentric loading of the fastener from an eccentrically designed bracing attachment would render the applied tables useless or at least require further structural evaluation. UL and the NFPA 13 committee have worked independently on this issue. While UL may list an attachment with a non-concentric fastener-mounting hole, these may not be appropriate for use with the NFPA 13 Fastener Tables. Check the manufacturer's literature.

Providing calculations for all bracing under the design conditions prescribed by NFPA 13 has always presented a challenge to design engineers and AHJs. Tables A-6-.4.5(a)/(b) (NFPA 13 1999 edition) show a standard calculation format. My company has always supported the proper use and verifiable application of bracing to provide the important protection for which it was intended. In this light, we have developed a software program that performs the calculations. It addresses this issue of verifiable proper use of bracing following the NFPA and UL guidelines. ♦

DFS Staff and Hazmat Technicians Honored At Recognition Event

On January 14, 2002, all DFS staff and Hazmat technicians were honored for their efforts in the aftermath of the *Attack on America*. After the September 11th incident, DFS staff worked tirelessly to support the fire service during a time of great uncertainty and anxiety for all Americans. DFS staff had a first-hand look at what our first responders were doing to protect the public. The members of the six regional Hazmat teams answered more than 900 calls for help on "suspicious envelopes" and "white powder scares". They ran day and night for months on end stretching a system designed to respond to the occasional transportation or industrial hazmat release. Fire Marshal Coan commended his staff for their continued efforts and participation. All DFS staff and Hazmat technicians provided the support that allowed the organization to move forward and complete its mission and to present continued service to the fire service and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Marshal Coan accepted an award on behalf of all DFS staff presented by Secretary Jajuga, for their continued efforts during this time of crisis. Accepting awards on behalf of each

division, were our *Pride In Performance* recipients, Joanne Melanson, Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), Judy O'Brien, Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA), and Beth Hill, Administrative Services. Accepting on behalf of the Hazmat division was Casey Jensen and Mike Leone representing the Hazmat technicians. Chief McCaffrey of the Watertown Fire Department and Chairman of the Fire Services Commission, Dick Bangs, Chairman of the Fire Training Council, Chief Kyle of Marlborough Fire Department and Chairman of the Hazmat Policy Board, and Chief Partridge of Berkley Fire Department and President of the Fire Chiefs' Association were all in attendance to present each division with their award. Congratulations to all DFS staff members and Hazmat technicians for their continued participation and enormous contributions to the fire service. Their continued support has provided the fire service with the tools to keep the citizens of the Commonwealth safe from further threats and maintain a secure environment. ♦

New Risk, Hazard and Value Evaluation Program for Local Officials

Through a cooperative agreement with the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) has recently released the Risk, Hazard and Value Evaluation (RHAVE) program. RHAVE is a software-based program used by local public policy makers who choose to collect useful information and data regarding the identification and assessment of fire and related risks within their community.

Information collected through the use of the RHAVE model may then be used by community leaders when developing objective, quantifiable risk reduction policies such as the deployment of emergency service resources. The concept is a simple-to-use methodology combining forms, formulas, databases, and data analysis.

The program consists of a users guide, software on CD-ROM (Microsoft Windows operating systems only) and accompanying installation instructions. The RHAVE process may be used in conjunction with the *Self Assessment for Fire and Emergency Services Manual* published by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) or the model may be used as a standalone tool. CFAI will provide a complimentary copy to those fire agencies that have previously received the self-assessment manual. USFA will provide one copy of the RHAVE program to fire chiefs upon written request on department letterhead.

To order, submit requests in writing to the USFA Publications Center, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727 or fax (301) 447-1213. For additional information visit the USFA web site at www.usfa.fema.gov. ♦

Preliminary Firefighter Fatality Statistics For 2001

Heart Attacks Remain Leading Cause

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) announced on January 10, 2002 that 441 firefighters died while on-duty in the United States in 2001. This total, which is more than four and one-half times the average annual number of firefighter deaths for the last decade, includes 343 firefighters lost at the World Trade Center on September 11. The loss represents the worst total since the USFA began tracking firefighter fatalities in 1977.

In 2001, firefighter fatalities were reported in 86 communities in 33 states. These totals are provisional and may change as additional information about firefighter fatalities is received.

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11 that claimed the lives of 343 members of the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) is the worst single incident loss of firefighter lives in history.

There were eight incidents in 2001 where more than one firefighter was killed; two of these tragedies occurred in New York City. In addition to the World Trade Center losses, three firefighters were killed in the explosion of a hardware store in New York City on Father's Day. Other firefighters lost during the line of duty include the following:

- Four wildland firefighters were killed in July when they were trapped by rapid-fire progress in a forest fire in Washington state.
- Three firefighters were killed in the crash of a firefighting helicopter in Montana during August.
- Two firefighters were killed when two firefighting aircraft collided in

midair while fighting a wildfire in California during August.

- A total of 14 firefighters died in association with wildfire incidents.
- Two Illinois firefighters were killed when they were trapped in the basement of a burning structure in February.
- Two Missouri firefighters were killed when they were trapped by rapid-fire progress in a residential fire in March.
- Two Pennsylvania firefighters drowned as they attempted to recover the body of a boater.
- 79 single firefighter fatality incidents occurred.

The vast majority of firefighter fatalities in 2001 occurred on the scene of a fire incident with 384 deaths in the category (343 were the result of the World Trade Center collapse). The balance of fatalities occurred as follows:

- Twenty firefighters died as they responded to an emergency or returned from one; many of these deaths involve vehicle collisions.
- Eleven deaths occurred during training.
- Three firefighters died at the scene of non-fire emergencies such as the two Pennsylvania firefighters who drowned during a water recovery.
- One firefighter died of a heart attack just after the conclusion of an emergency incident.
- Twenty-two firefighters engaged in other fire department duties at the time of their death occurred in 2001.
- An Ohio firefighter struck and killed by a falling section of a tree while testing fire hydrants is an example of this type of incident.

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Firefighter Deaths

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Heart attacks continue to be a leading cause of firefighter deaths, killing 39 firefighters in 2001. The 39 deaths represent 8.8 percent of the 2001 total. This percentage rises to 40 percent when the massive number of FDNY firefighters is excluded from the calculation.

The largest number of firefighter fatalities by month occurred in September with 352 deaths. The lowest number of firefighter fatalities by month occurred in November and December with three deaths in each month.

The USFA contacts state fire marshals at the beginning of each year to verify the names of firefighters reported to have died on-duty during the previous year and expects to have the annual fatality report completed by early June. ♦

In-Service Standard for Public Safety Personnel

Copyright 2000 by the Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division announces implementation of the second phase of the municipal standards program: the In-Service Medical and Physical Fitness Standards Regulations for Municipal Public Safety Personnel. In-Service medical examinations are scheduled to begin this month with In-Service Physical Abilities Tests (PATs) commencing in June. Recently, HRD offered briefings to police and fire departments around the state to discuss the In-Service testing program.

The first phase of the standards program, Initial-Hire Medical and Physical Fitness Standards, began in January 1997. From then until April 15, 2001, we have tested a total of 4,206 police officer candidates, of whom 2,974 were from standards & wellness communities (a standards and wellness community is a municipality

that has accepted the provisions legislated in MGL Chapter 31, Section 61A.) During that same period, we also tested 2,507 firefighter candidates, of whom 2,048 were from standards and wellness communities.

The standards program is designed to ensure that police officers and firefighters are medically qualified and physically able to perform the demanding essential functions of their jobs, both at fires and throughout their careers. MGL Chapter 31, Section 61A requires all police officers and firefighters who were appointed to departments in standards and wellness communities on or after November 2, 1996, to undergo medical examinations and Physical Abilities Tests (PATs) prior to being hired and then periodically after being appointed. In-Service medical examinations are required every four years and In-Service PATs every two years.

Incumbent police officers and firefighters will be given three chances to pass both the medical examination and the PAT. HRD will provide these individuals with the In-Service PAT Preparation Guide sixteen weeks before they are scheduled to take the PAT. (Sixteen weeks is the length of time determined necessary to prepare fully for the tests.) Any individual not meeting the In-Service medical or physical fitness standards on the first attempt will be afforded another sixteen weeks to prepare for a reexamination. This will provide the individuals time to address any medical or physical fitness issues preventing them from meeting the standards. Police officers and firefighters will continue to be compensated while they strive to meet the standards.

Personnel who are unable to pass the medical examination or meet the physical abilities standards after three tries will be subject to termination. Any termination as a result of not meeting the In-Service standards will be carried out in accordance with applicable collective bargaining

agreements and/or procedural rights allowed under Section 41 or Chapter 31. This will ensure that any such termination honors the collective bargaining and civil service rights of incumbent police officers and firefighters.

In addition to the Standards Program, the Department of Public Health, along with HRD, administers the state Wellness Program, which assists police and fire departments in setting up and paying for departmental wellness programs, designed to help public safety personnel meet the In-Service standards. The In-Service Standards program was developed as a result of HRD's collaboration with the Secretary of Public Safety, the Criminal Justice Training Council, the Department of Fire Services, the Department of Public Health, members of the legislature and their staffs, the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts, police labor representatives, police and fire chiefs and members of their departments from around the state, and the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

Each was critical in helping to ensure that this second portion of the standards program would come to fruition in a fair and workable way. Together we have crafted a medical and physical fitness standards program that should result in a more fit and healthy public safety workforce that can better serve the Commonwealth's citizens. ♦

NEWS FROM CPSC

The following are excerpts from press releases issued by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regarding products recalled for fire or burn hazards. Consumers should immediately stop using any of these products and contact the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission or the manufacturer for instructions on how to proceed.

November 29, 2001 - Release # 02-052

Wooden Candle Holders

In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Darice Inc., of Strongsville, OH, is voluntarily recalling 60,000 wooden candleholders. When the candle burns down to the bottom of the wick it can set the candle holder on fire, which poses fire and burn hazards to consumers. Darice Inc. has not received any reports of incidents. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injuries.

The recalled candleholders are constructed of unfinished wood and are designed to be painted or decorated. The candleholders, which are intended to support taper candles, come in five different shapes and sizes.

The Darice wholesale catalog, independent craft stores nationwide, including Pat Catan's Craft Centers and Ben Franklin Crafts, and Wal-Mart Stores, sold the candle holders from October 2000 through November 2001 for about \$2.

January 24, 2002 - Release # 02-090

Dried Flower Candles Recalled

Value City and Schottenstein stores, of Columbus, OH, are voluntarily recalling about 6,400 botanical candles, which contain dried flowers. When burned, the dried flowers in the candle can catch on fire, posing fire

and burn hazards to consumers.

Value City has received one report of the flowers in these candles catching on fire. No injuries or damage was reported. The candles are made of uncolored wax and have dried yellow, purple and brown flowers in the outer layer. The candles are either square or round, and are about 4-inches high by 4-inches wide.

Value City and Schottenstein discount stores sold these candles nationwide from January 2001 through December 2001 for about \$4.



January 24, 2002 - Release # 02-089

Gel Candle Kits Recalled For Plastic Candleholders

Value City and Schottenstein stores, of Columbus, OH, are voluntarily recalling about 2,300 children's gel candle kits. When burned, the gel candle can melt the plastic candleholders included with the kit, posing a fire hazard to consumers.

CPSC has received two reports of consumers claiming the plastic candleholder melted and started a fire. One report involved substantial damage to the consumer's home, and a consumer reportedly suffered burns to his hands and feet. The other report involved minor damage to furniture.

The Gel Candles kit includes four bags of gel chips in bright colors, wicks, glitter, two glass holders, and two plastic candleholders. The candleholders are in the shapes of a bumblebee and a dragonfly, or a tulip and a daisy. The gel is scented in fruit flavors. The kits have model numbers

"3041" or "3042" written on the box. Other writing on the box includes, "Express Ways!™ Gel Candles." "Scent-sational Colored Gell" and "AGES 8 AND OLDER."

Value City and Schottenstein discount stores nationwide sold these gel candle kits from July 2001 through December 2001 for about \$4.

November 29, 2001 - Release # 02-053

Water Fountains With Candle Holders Recalled

Alco Industries Inc., of Edison, NJ., is voluntarily announcing the recall of 75,000 water fountains with candleholders. The tea candles on the water fountains can flare up, posing fire and burn hazards to consumers. Alco Industries has received two reports of candles flaring up, including two consumers who suffered burn injuries.

The recalled water fountains have a black base and two tiers of rocks over which water flows. The decorative rocks come in various shapes and colors. Two candles are perched above the fountain, set in black candleholders, and lit behind a painted glass cover. A sticker on the bottom of the fountain reads, "Made in China." The "Submersible Pump" attached to the bottom of the fountain reads in part, "Jebo" and "Made in China."

Mass retailers nationwide sold these water fountain candle sets from February 2001 through October 2001 for between \$10 and \$20.

December 27, 2001 - Release # 02-079

Pine Tree Candles Recalled

The Neiman Marcus Group Inc., of Dallas, TX, is voluntarily recalling about 620 Pine Tree Candles. The candles can collapse, causing the flame and hot wax to spread, posing a fire

hazard to consumers. Another retailer received one report of a similar candle that collapsed and spread the flame. No injuries or property damage were reported. Neither Neiman Marcus nor Bergdorf Goodman stores have received any reports of incidents or injuries.

The Pine Tree Candle is shaped like a pine tree, and comes in three colors (lime green, royal blue and gold) and three sizes. The small candle is about 8 inches tall and 5 1/2 inches wide, the medium-sized candle is about 9 inches tall and 6 inches wide, and the tall candle is about 11 1/2 inches tall and 3 1/2 inches wide. There is a round sticker on the bottom of each candle that contains warnings regarding the use of the candle, and indicates that the candle is made in Italy. The packaging for each candle also has a sales sticker with a SKU number. The SKU number for the lime green candle is 3162 4045, and the SKU number for the royal blue candle is 3162 4037. The SKU numbers for the gold candle are 57604026 (for the small candle), 57604034 (for the medium-sized candle) and 57604042 (for the large candle).

Neiman Marcus stores nationwide and Bergdorf Goodman stores in New York sold the candles from the early Fall through December 21, 2001 for \$12-\$14 (for the small candle), \$15 (for the medium candle), and \$26 (for the large candle).

December 11, 2001 - Release # 02-06

Lawn-Boy Recalls Power Mowers

Lawn-Boy Inc., of Bloomington, Minn., is recalling about 90,000 Lawn-Boy power mowers. Stress cracks can develop in the mower's fuel tank, allowing gasoline to leak and posing a risk of fire and burn injuries. Lawn-Boy received nearly 400 reports of fuel tanks on these mowers leaking, and one report of a fire. No injuries or property damage were reported.

The recalled Lawn-Boy SilverPro and GoldPro Series are walk-behind, 21-inch mowers powered by 2-cycle Duraforce engines. "Duraforce" is written on the top of the recoil starter. A decal on the right rear of the mower's housing has one of the following model numbers: 10247, 10252, 10323, 10324, 10424, 10550 or 10552. The decal also has a serial number starting with "21."

Lawn-Boy dealers, and department and home center stores sold these mowers from December 2000 through November 2001 for between \$300 and \$600.

December 13, 2001 - Release # 02-064

Christmas Lights Recalled

NBG International Inc., of Houston, Texas, is voluntarily recalling about 100,000 strings of "Rice Light" decorative Christmas lights. The lights have undersize wire and could present electric shock or fire hazards. CPSC and NBG International have not received any reports of injuries or incidents associated with these Christmas lights. This recall is being conducted to prevent electric shocks and fires.

The Rice Christmas lights are 21-feet long with 140 non-replaceable mini-bulbs. The lights have a control box that allows for an eight-function, four-way flashing light show. The attached 3-inch control box has a round dial on top numbered "1" through "8." The wires are available in three colors: black, white or green. The lights have a fused plug, and are sold in a green box that included the writing "Rice Light," "140 Mini Bulb String" and "MADE IN CHINA." There is no mark of an independent testing laboratory.

Novelty and holiday stores sold these lights nationwide from June 1998 through November 2001 for between \$7 and \$10.

December 13, 2001 - Release # 02-065

Christmas Light Sets Recalled

Winstar International Inc., of Brooklyn, NY, is voluntarily recalling about 9,000 strings of Christmas lights. These lights have undersized wiring and lack over-current protection. They pose electrocution and electric shock hazards to consumers and also are fire hazards. CPSC and Winstar are not aware of any injuries or incidents associated with these Christmas lights. This recall is being conducted to prevent injuries.

These are miniature Christmas lights with 100 lights on each string of various colors, including green, blue, red, yellow, purple and clear. The plug has "125V-3A" imprinted on it. There is no other labeling on the string of lights, and no mark of an independent testing laboratory. The packaging is a red box with a photo of a Christmas tree on the right side and a window showing the lights inside. Writing on the box includes, "JUEGO DE LUCES DE NAVIDAD," "100 MINIATURE LIGHTS," "FIVE-WAY FLASHER," "PRE-TESTED," and "ENERGY SAVER."

Discount and dollar stores in New York and New Jersey sold these Christmas lights from October 2000 through November 2001 for about \$1.

December 13, 2001 - Release # 02-066

Outdoor Lighting Timers Recalled

Homemaster Inc., of Eatontown, NJ, is voluntarily recalling about 50,000 Outdoor Lighting Timers. The timers have reversed polarity in the wiring, potentially allowing a current to flow through a consumer's body, posing a shock hazard to consumers. Homemaster has not received any reports of injuries or incidents.

This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injuries. The recalled timers have the model number

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"HOT100" printed on the back. The plastic timers are about 5 inches long, dark green, and have a timing switch on the front that ranges from 1 to 8 hours or from dusk to dawn. A three-prong plug at the end of a 6.5-inch green cord extends from the top of the timer.

Menards stores nationwide sold the timers from October 2000 through October 2001 for about \$10.

December 14, 2001 - Release # 02-067

Porter-Cable Portable Generators Recalled

DeVilbiss Air Power Co., of Jackson, Tenn., is voluntarily recalling about 600 Porter-Cable portable generators. A small hole in the generator's fuel tank, where it mounts to the frame, can leak fuel and pose a fire hazard to consumers. DeVilbiss has received 10 reports of leaking fuel tanks, though no injuries have been reported.

The recalled gasoline-powered generators have the model number BSI550-W printed on the fuel tank between the handles. These generators also have the date code "09-10-01" printed on a bar code label on the gasoline tank support rail. The generators are red with a black fuel tank and have the brand "Porter-Cable" printed on the fuel tank.

Major home centers nationwide sold these generators from September 2001 through October 2001 for approximately \$600.

Generators produced on dates other than "09-10-01" are not included in this recall.

December 14, 2001 - Release # 02-068

TruHeat Corp. Spa Heaters Recalled

TruHeat Corp., of Allegan, Mich., is

voluntarily recalling about 142,000 spa heaters sold with Hot Spring and TigerRiver spas. The spa heaters have an internal electrical connection that can overheat and ignite the heater and spa, posing a fire hazard. CPSC and TruHeat have received 192 reports of the heaters on these spas failing, and 22 reports of these incidents resulting in fire damage outside the heater or spa. No injuries have been reported.

These are No-Fault 6000 model spa heaters sold with Hot Spring and Tiger River spas. The spa brand name is written on the control panel. The spa heater brand name and model number are on a label on the side of the heater. The spa heater is located behind a removable panel on the front of the spa. Read the owner's manual for instructions on turning off power to the spa before accessing the spa heater. This recall only includes spas installed in 220-volt applications.

Independent spa dealers nationwide sold spas with these heaters from January 1997 through January 2001. The price for these spas is between \$4,000 and \$9,000.



January 16, 2002 - Release # 02-084

Nightlights Recalled

Intermatic Inc., of Spring Grove, IL, is voluntarily recalling about 156,000 electroluminescent nightlights. The nightlights can short-circuit, posing shock and burn hazards to consumers.

Intermatic has not received any reports of incidents. This recall is being

conducted to prevent the possibility of injury. The recalled Electroluminescent Night Lights have model numbers GN172 and GN165, which are molded on the back of the lights. The model GN172 lights are gray in color and are about 1 1/2 inches square by 1/4 inch thick with two metal electrical prongs. The model GN165 lights are gray in color and are about 4-3/8 inches in height, 1-5/8 inches wide and 1/4 inch thick with two metal electrical prongs. Also molded on the back of the nightlights are the words, "Intermatic Inc." and "Made in Taiwan."

Hardware stores and electrical distributors nationwide, including True Value Hardware Stores, sold these nightlights between January 1999 and December 2001 for about \$4.



January 16, 2002 - Release # 02-085

Eddie Bauer Outlets Recall Stainless Steel Lunch Bottles

Eddie Bauer Outlet Stores, of Redmond, WA, is voluntarily recalling about 4,000 stainless steel lunch bottles. The insulated bottles have a weak seal and can leak hot liquids, which poses a serious burn hazard to consumers. Eddie Bauer has received four reports of the insulated bottles leaking, though no injuries have been reported.

The recalled Wide Mouth Lunch Bottles are 32 oz. stainless steel containers, with a black base and handle, a black carrying strap, and a two-piece lid (including a drinking cup). The insulated bottles have the words "Eddie Bauer" written on one side of the

container (which is located 1 3/4 inches from the lower edge of the plastic collar), and a label that reads "Eddie Bauer Wide Mouth Lunch Bottle" on the other. On the bottom of the bottle there is a sticker that reads "Made in China." Eddie Bauer outlet stores nationwide sold these insulated bottles from September 2001 through November 2001 for about \$24.

Lunch bottles that have the words "Made in Korea" printed on the bottom or have the "Eddie Bauer" signature logo printed 1 1/4 inches from the lower edge of the plastic collar are not part of this recall.



January 23, 2002 - Release # 02-086

Electric Pressure Washers Recalled

MCM International of Eden Prairie, MN, is voluntarily recalling about 50,000 Black Cat™ electric pressure washers. MCM International imported the pressure washers from a manufacturer in China who installed counterfeit ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) plugs on some of the units, without MCM's approval.

All of the plugs are labeled "WELLONG"; however, the pressure washers with counterfeit "WELLONG" GFCI plugs appear virtually identical to those with genuine "WELLONG" GFCIs. It will require a professional inspection to identify the counterfeit GFCIs. GFCIs are important safety devices that are intended to protect consumers against shock or electrocution. CPSC and MCM International have not received any reports of incidents in which the GFCI plugs failed to operate. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injury.

The recalled Black Cat™ pressure washers have a sticker with a cat and the words "Black-Cat" on each side of the unit. The model numbers - either BC-2000 or TW-1750 - can be found on a label on the right side of the power station. The label also reads in part, "Made in China," "High Pressure Cleaning Machines," and the "Production Date" (which should fall between March 2001 and July 2001). The GFCI plugs have a green "Reset" button and a blue "Test" button - some plugs also have a label that reads "CONNECT TO INDIVIDUAL BRANCH CIRCUIT ONLY." On the back of the GFCI plug near the electrical prongs are the words "WELLONG" and "Rainproof."

Target and Menard's stores nationwide sold these pressure washers from August 2001 to September 2001 for between \$85 and \$100.

CPSC reminds consumers that any electrical product that is used near water should contain a GFCI, in the plug or outlet. Prior to the implementation of the voluntary standard calling for the inclusion of GFCI plugs with high-pressure cleaning machines, there were several electrocution deaths and injuries. These incidents did not involve the Black Cat pressure washer.



January 31, 2002 - Release # 02-095

Vector Power Inverters with GFCI Outlets Recalled

Vector Manufacturing Ltd., of Fort Lauderdale, FL, is voluntarily recalling about 1,600 power inverters with ground-fault circuit-interrupter (GFCI) outlets. Power inverters convert DC voltage to AC voltage to allow the operation of household products using battery power. The

GFCIs on the inverters, which are intended to protect consumers against shock and electrocution, could fail to operate correctly.

Vector Manufacturing has not received any reports of injuries or incidents associated with these power inverters. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injuries.

The recalled power inverters have a red, yellow or black rectangular-shaped body with white or gray electrical outlets on the side, next to the volt and amp meters. The outlets on the recalled inverters have "TEST" and "RESET" buttons. They include the following model numbers and names, located on a label on the top of the power inverters:

Model Numbers and Model Names:

VEC049GF	MAXX Series 1000 Watt Power Inverter
VEC049GM	MAXX Series 1000 Watt Power Inverter for Marine applications
VEC050GF	MAXX Series 1500 Watt Power Inverter
VEC050GM	MAXX Series 1500 Watt Power Inverter for Marine applications
VEC051GM	MAXX Series 3000 Watt Power Inverter for Marine applications
VEC049GF	Force Series 1000 Watt Power Inverter
VEC050G	Power Force Series 1500 Watt Power Inverter
VEC049G	Power Force Series 1000 Watt Power Inverter

Automotive and marine stores nationwide, and mail-order catalogs sold these inverters from November 1999 through November 2001 for between \$365 and \$900.

Power inverters with black electrical outlets are not included in the recall.

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January 31, 2002 - Release # 02-096

Whirlpool Announce Recall of Dehumidifiers

Whirlpool Corp., of Benton Harbor, Mich., is voluntarily recalling about 1.4 million dehumidifiers. The dehumidifiers can overheat, posing a fire hazard. Whirlpool has received 13 reports of the dehumidifiers overheating and causing fires, three of which resulted in extensive property damage. No injuries have been reported.

The recalled dehumidifiers were sold under the Whirlpool, Kenmore and ComfortAire brand names. The dehumidifiers are white plastic, about 2-feet high and have a front-mounted water bucket. They have serial numbers that begin with QG, QH, QJ, QK or QL. The serial number can be found on a label located on the wall behind the water bucket.

Department and appliance stores nationwide sold the dehumidifiers from February 1997 through December 2001 for between \$130 and \$260. Dehumidifiers with water buckets located in back are not involved in the recall.

February 4, 2002 - Release #02-097

Thermador Gas Ranges Recalled

BSH Home Appliances Corp., of Huntington Beach, CA, is voluntarily recalling about 2,460 Thermador brand gas ranges. Hot air is vented below the small oven and causes the metal surface on the door of this oven to get too hot, presenting a burn hazard to consumers. BSH has received one report of high temperatures on the surface of one of the ranges. No injuries have been reported.

The recalled ovens are 48-inch All-Gas Professional Ranges and were sold under the Thermador brand name. The ranges are stainless steel and have small and large side-by-side ovens.

Only model numbers PRG484GGUS, PRG486GDUS, and PRG486GLUS and serial number ranges 98020001-98129999, 99010001-99129999, 20010001-20129999 and 81010001-81119999 are included in the recall. The model and serial number are located on a data plate behind the kick panel at the bottom front of the range.

Appliance and specialty stores nationwide sold the ranges from March 1998 through November 2001 for between \$5540 and \$6370.



February 7, 2002 - Release # 02-098

Honeywell Moveable Baseboard Heaters Recalled

Honeywell Consumer Products Inc. (HCP), of Southborough, MA, is voluntarily recalling about 450,000 moveable baseboard heaters. The heating element in these baseboard heaters can short-circuit and ignite combustible material under the heater, posing fire and burn hazards to consumers.

CPSC and HCP have received 53 reports of these heaters short-circuiting, including two cases where the floor beneath the heater was damaged due to fire. No injuries have been reported. The recalled HZ-514 HCP baseboard heaters are about 40 inches long, 8 inches tall, and 4 inches wide at their widest point. The white baseboard heaters have the name "Honeywell" printed on the front of the unit. The recalled heaters have: * a six-digit date code beginning with "97" on a sticker on the back or the bottom of the unit, or * a date code beginning with the digit "8" or "9" stamped on the flat metal prong of the electrical

cord's plug, or * a date code beginning with the digits "00" stamped on the flat metal prong of the electrical cord's plug and "TYPE I" or nothing stamped on the bottom of the unit.

Department stores and home centers nationwide sold these baseboard heaters from October 1997 through January 2001 for between \$30 and \$50. Baseboard heaters with "01" stamped on the metal prong of the electrical plug or "TYPE II" stamped on the bottom of the unit are not included in this recall.

February 7, 2002 - Release # 02-099

Recall of Black & Decker Brand VersaToast Toasters

Applia Consumer Products Inc., of Miami Lakes, FL, is voluntarily recalling about 2.1 million VersaToast wide-slot toasters. Applia made and sold these toasters under the Black & Decker brand. The heating element in these toasters can continue to operate after use, posing a fire hazard.

CPSC and Applia are aware of nine reports of fires associated with these toasters after a period of non-use, resulting in minor property damage to kitchen cabinets. One minor injury was reported to the firm, but it has not been confirmed and is under investigation. The recall includes both two-slice and four-slice Black & Decker brand VersaToast wide-slot toasters. "BLACK & DECKER," "VersaToast" and "WIDE SLOT" are written on the side of the toaster near the cooking controls. The toasters have either white or black plastic enclosures. They have model number T1200, T1250, T1400 or T1450 written on the bottom of the toaster.

Discount department stores, including Wal-Mart, Service Merchandise, Kohl's Department Stores and Bradlees, sold the toasters nationwide from June 1999 through January 2002. The two-slice toasters sold for between \$10 and \$20. The four-slice toasters sold for between \$18 and \$30. ♦

A Generous Gesture from New England Patriots Owner Bob Kraft

In a generous display of sincere appreciation, Mr. Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, presented a block of tickets to Governor Swift for the January 12 Patriots/Raiders playoff football game which was held in Foxboro. These tickets were presented to the Governor as an appreciation for agencies and individuals who played an integral role in responding to the events of September 11 and the aftermath. As part of this block of tickets, 10 were presented to the Hazardous Materials Response Program to be distributed to Hazmat technicians and 5 tickets were presented to the Marshal for distribution to DFS full and part-time staff. A lottery was drawn on Thursday, January 10. A stipulation from the Governor's office was that each

individual should receive one ticket; and should that individual not be able to use the ticket, another name would be drawn. As a result, due to commitments already made, several names were drawn before the tickets could be given away. The lucky persons who attended the game were:

Hazmat Technicians:

Dana Palmer, District 1
David Cote, District 1
John Howard, District 1
Gary Silvia, District 1
David Curran, District 3
Scott Ketcham, District 5
John Weber, District 6
George Rose, District 6

Tom Witkowski, District 6

DFS Staff::

Everett Pierce

Vanessa Galica

Christina Gentilucci

Noreen Whitaker

Ruth Labonte

The DFS staff sat with other public safety individuals and all were invited to participate in the pre-game ceremonies. Other fire service groups receiving tickets from the Governor as part of this block from Mr. Kraft included the Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains, the Critical Incident Stress Management teams, and the Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts. ♦



Fire Officials at Foxboro Stadium



DFS Staff at Foxboro Stadium



Tape Leads to Arrest in Fitchburg State College Fires

Arson investigators connected five dormitory fires to a student from Natick after a piece of tape found at a dormitory stairwell fire matched the tape used to hold up posters in the student's dormitory room.

Timothy P. Reilly, 21, confessed to investigators that he lighted the fires at Aubuchon Hall at Fitchburg State College just as a joke. There were 10 fires on campus in the fall; Mr. Reilly is believed to have set five of them but only admitted to three.

Mr. Reilly was first considered a suspect after a small fire was discovered in an Aubuchon Hall stairwell on the morning of November 30. Within hours of discovering the fire, a Central Team State Police fire investigator and a campus police officer proceeded to Mr. Reilly's dormitory room, where they discovered a lighter and rolls of the same type of tape that was found at the stairwell fire. Soon after the recovery of the lighter and tape, Mr. Reilly confessed to setting the stairwell fire and two others, on October 3 and November 27.

The fires investigators believe were set by Mr. Reilly mostly involve pieces of paper. However, these small fires had the potential to spread and endanger

hundreds of students, which in turn prompted investigations by school and fire officials. Mr. Reilly is charged with five counts, each of attempting to burn a building and of destruction of property under \$250.

Bird Mansion Arsonists Sentenced

Local Police Knowledge of Local Troublemakers Breaks Case

On Tuesday, November 30, 2000 at 4 p.m., the Walpole Fire Department responded to the boarded-up historic Bird Mansion on Mylod Street. Firefighters from area fire departments spent twenty hours putting out the \$2 million dollar fire in the old 40-room house.

This investigation was successful because the community got involved, it started while suppression was ongoing and because local police, local fire and state police investigators worked hand-in-glove till the case was solved. Two Walpole residents, well-known to local police, were reportedly seen in the woods near the mansion just before the fire became externally visible. Walpole Police watched the home of one of the suspects until he came home. Out of sight a few blocks away, they asked the driver of the car that had dropped the

suspect off if he would speak with investigators voluntarily at police headquarters. The driver told the team that he was with the two subjects after the fire and that while they were watching the fire on the news, they were bragging about how they set the fire. The team learned who else was present when these

discussions were taking place and spoke to them.

The team worked non-stop for over 24 hours. Around 4 p.m. the day after the fire, investigators went to the home of one of the suspects and asked him if he would voluntarily come to the Walpole Police. The man agreed but insisted on bringing his girlfriend. It seemed he had planned an alibi with his girlfriend, which she eventually reneged on. The second suspect heard that his partner in crime was at the police department and also showed up.

These two subjects both confessed to being in the mansion and to the setting of the fire.

Gregory McDonald, age 21, and Michael Arenda, 19, were charged with arson and breaking and entering. They both pled guilty to the charges and are serving jail time. McDonald was sentenced to 2 1/2 years in the House of Correction to be followed by five years probation. Arenda was sentenced to serve 18 months to be followed by three years probation.

This case shows how important teamwork is in solving arson cases. The Walpole police detective knew all the players and their hang-outs. He took an active role in this case and was a tremendous asset. The fire department's investigator was on the first unit to respond to the fire. He told the investigation of the ladder blocking the door, the suppression operations, and where the fire was located upon his arrival. Other Walpole police officers were instrumental and their assistance was timely.

Two Arsonists Die; Building Owner Indicted for Murder and Arson

On Saturday, December 1, 2001, shortly before midnight, the Fall River Fire Department responded to



the report of a fire at 30 Coral St. Members of the Fire Investigation Unit's South Team were called in to assist in the origin and cause investigation. The investigation revealed that this fire was incendiary; gasoline was used to ignite and spread this fire. Two fire victims were found in the basement of the home. State Police fire investigators joined with the Fall River Fire Department and Police Department to form the investigation team which was assisted by a detective from the State Police Bristol County District Attorneys Office. The District Attorney's Office has jurisdiction in murder cases.

The investigation team came to the conclusion that the homeowner had arranged for the two victims of the fire to burn his home while he was in Florida. Unfortunately, the two arsonists were trapped by their own handiwork .

The homeowner, Joseph Megna, has been indicted for two counts of murder two, arson, and conspiracy to commit arson. He has been extradited from Florida to face these charges in Massachusetts.

Once again teamwork and cooperation are why this case made its way into the court system. Arson is a difficult crime to prosecute and arson-for-hire when the people hired are not available to testify is even harder. Careful cause and origin determination followed by old-fashioned policework built a solid case for prosecutors. This case was a collaborative effort from the State Police of the Fire Investigation Unit's South Team, the Fall River Police, the Fall River Fire Department, State Police in the Bristol County District Attorney's Office.

Peabody Hotel Fire

On January 16, 2002, a fire occurred in a third floor room of the Hampton Inn in Peabody. Troopers assigned to the Fire Investigation Unit's North Team and A-K9 "Webster", assisted

the Peabody Fire Investigation Unit in the investigation. The fire was determined to be incendiary. As a result of the ongoing criminal investigation, the night-maintenance man was interviewed. He advised investigators of how well he reacted under the pressure of discovering the fire, then helping guests to safety. He subsequently admitted to setting the fire as well. He was arrested and charged. Oddly enough, he is still employed part-time by another hotel, the Marriott Hotel, despite the charges.

Winchendon's 'Blind Arsonist'

The Central Team responded to a residential structure fire in the town of Winchendon on January 10, 2002. Ralph Smith had allegedly violated a restraining order and entered the home of his wife and children and set it on fire. His daughter was able to call for help using a cell phone even after Mr. Smith reportedly tried to set it on fire as well. Police found Mr. Smith hiding in the backyard and have charged him with burning of a building, attempted murder, assault with intent to kill, simple assault and battery, and violation of a 209a restraining order. Mr. Smith allegedly suffers from low vision, so he has been dubbed the "blind arsonist." ♦

Motor Vehicle Arson

Many communities started to see an increase in motor vehicle fires in 2000 and many more surely will when the numbers for 2001 are tallied. In 1987, the state implemented the Burned/Recovered Motor Vehicle Reporting law that requires the owner to personally present themselves at the fire department in the community where the fire occurred and fill out a report. Prior to this law, many average citizens believed it was acceptable to arrange to have their cars "stolen" and burned. All that was required to collect on the insurance, was to inform the insurance company that your car had

been recovered, burned. This law, combined with good investigations, has caused an 84% reduction in auto arsons from the high in 1987 to 2000. One way to look at how far we've come is to compare the fact that the City of Boston alone had 2,555 motor vehicle fires in 1987 and in 2000 the entire state of Massachusetts had only 798 motor vehicle arsons. Boston had 154 motor vehicle arsons in 2000 showing a dramatic drop of 94% from 1987-2000.

Recently, the state police fire investigators assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal have worked closely with local police and fire officials to solve a number of big ticket motor vehicle arson for insurance fraud cases.

Chelsea

Troopers from the North Team made arrests in three recent motor vehicle fires. On October 22, 2001, a 1990 Plymouth Laser was discovered burning on the side of the road on Suffolk St., Chelsea. The ensuing investigation by Troopers assigned to the North Team, along with members of the Chelsea Fire Investigation Unit, revealed that the fire was intentionally set with the use of gasoline as an accelerant. During the interview with the owner, he admitted to setting the fire in order to collect the insurance money and send it back to his sick mother in El Salvador.

Revere

On October 30, 2001, a 1998 Infiniti QX4 exploded and burst into flames in the parking lot of the Pizzeria Uno, Squire Rd., Revere. As a result of the ensuing investigation, Troopers Horgan and Zipper, along with members of the Revere Fire Investigation Unit, interviewed the owner and obtained an admission. During his statement, the 28 year old businessman, said that he burned his vehicle by strapping an M-80 firework to the side of a bleach bottle filled with gasoline. He said that he burned the \$28,000

Continued on page 24

MFIRS CORNER

Version 5 Is the One and Only

As of 12:01 a.m. on January 1, 2002, the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) version 5.0 is the only 'game' in town. Every fire department/district in Massachusetts should be using the new version. The staff in the Fire Data & Public Education Unit would like to thank you for complying with this effort and ask for your patience, as with any new system, we work out any problems that may arise.

Every incident that occurred on or after 1/1/02 and is reported to the Office of the State Fire Marshal must be submitted using the version 5 format. Any paper reports that come in using the old FP-32 version 4 (or less) format will be returned and the department will be requested to complete the appropriate version 5 forms instead. We are willing to work with all departments if the need should arise. If you have any questions (e.g. coding or what modules need to be used) please feel free to call Derryl Dion at (978) 567-3382 or Jennifer Mieth at (978) 567-3381.

MFIRS V5 CODING

Mutual Aid

Some questions have arisen as how to code incidents, and what modules to complete for incidents involving Mutual Aid Given and Automatic Aid Given.

If your department responds to another fire department's jurisdiction, you must complete on the Basic Module, sections A – Identification, B – Incident Location and C – Incident Type. You code section C as you would if you were in your own jurisdiction. For example, if you respond to a mutual aid call and you go directly to a structure fire, then your incident type is '111-Building Fire'; if you get called

to cover the receiving department's station, then the incident type would be '571-Cover assignment, standby, moveup', however, if you eventually get sent to the scene of the fire, then your final report would have the incident type of the fire/situation that you responded to. In section D you would use one of the two following codes, '3 – Mutual Aid Given' or '4 – Automatic Aid Given' depending on the type of aid given. You then must get the FDID# and state of the department receiving the aid. If you cannot obtain the FDID#, you may either call this office, or go to the DFS website under Fire Data to obtain a listing of all Massachusetts FDID#'s. For out-of-state FDID#'s please call Derryl Dion at (978) 567-3382. If you are able to get the receiving department's incident number, then this is all you have to complete for this office. The only other section you must complete is section M – Officer and Member Making Report. It is the responsibility of the hosting department to record all the information necessary to complete an incident report.

If you cannot get the incident # of the department receiving the aid, then you must complete the remainder of the Basic Module, using only the actions executed by your department. You do not have to complete any additional modules. The only exception to this is when you have a fire service casualty. If the casualty is a member of your department you must complete section H – Casualties on the Basic Module and complete a Fire Service Casualty Module for each casualty encountered.

If you are using third party software, then you will probably want to (and in some cases may be required to) complete the Basic Module and other modules to keep track of what you did at the local level.

Wildland & Brush Fires

Wildland and brush fire season is quickly approaching and here are a few coding tips:

1. Always complete a Basic Module first.
2. Use of the Wildland Fire Module is optional. If you complete a Wildland Fire Module, do not complete the regular Fire Module.
3. Use for the following Incident Type Codes:

- 140 Vegetation fire, other
- 141 Forrest, woods, or wildland fire
- 142 Brush or brush and grass mixture fire
- 143 Grass fire
- 160 Special outside fire, other
- 170 Cultivated vegetation crop fire, other
- 171 Cultivated grain, crop fire
- 172 Cultivated orchard or vineyard fire
- 173 Cultivated trees or nursery stock fire
- 561 Unauthorized burning
- 631 Controlled burning (authorized)
- 632 Prescribed burning (authorized)

4. If you use section B on the Basic Module – Alternate Location Specification, make sure that you have not completed section B – Location on the Basic Module except for checking the box indicating that the address is provided on the Wildland Fire Module.

5. Section I – Total Acres Burned = If less than one acre, you must use a decimal and list in tenths of an acre. The smallest reportable amount is 0.1 acres burned.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please contact Derryl Dion at (978) 567-3382 or Derryl.Dion@state.ma.us.

2001 Fire Data

If you haven't already done so, please forward any incident reports that occurred during the calendar year 2001. These may be submitted using either the version 4 or version 5 format.

2001 Fire Deaths

Preliminary data indicates 59 civilian fire deaths in the calendar year 2001: 31 men, 22 women and 6 children.

MFIRS CLASSES

The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy has scheduled an MFIRS version 5.0 class.

Course # 00039613 D
Date/Time 3/20/02 - 0800-1200 hrs
Location DFS - Northampton

2000 Fire Data

2000 County Profiles

The *2000 Analysis of Fire Experience by County*, also called the County Profiles are available upon request (except for Suffolk County). These reports look at the leading causes of fires, arsons and fire fatalities in each individual county in the Commonwealth. Each fire chief has received a copy of their county's profile (except, again Suffolk County, which is coming shortly.)

Over 75% of all structure fires occur in residences. In all but three of the counties, the leading cause of residential structure fires was unattended and other unsafe cooking practices. In the other three counties, the leading cause was either electrical problems or heating systems. This information may help target fire prevention programs. Statewide, in residential structure fires where smoke detector performance was known, smoke detectors were present but failed to operate in 20% of the fires, and none were present in 11% of the fires. If the statistics on smoke detector performance in your county are higher than the statewide average, this might be another area to target.

2000 MFIRS Annual Report

Analysis of the 2000 fire data is underway. If you have any good anecdotes about particular types of fires in calendar 2000 (such as candles, space heaters, dormitories, gas stations, etc.) or anecdotes that demonstrate fire prevention worked (such as sprinklers containing the fire, working smoke alarms minimizing human or property damage, or pre-construction considerations minimizing paying off when a fire struck) we'd like to hear from you. Examples of public education positively effecting an outcome (such as installing a smoke alarm upon urging of the 3rd grader and then needing it, or finding the entire family at the meeting place) would also be welcome.



2000 M-BIRS Annual Report

The *2000 Annual Report of the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System* (M-BIRS) is now available upon request. This report looks at the leading causes of burn injuries and analyzes burn injuries by age group to better target prevention strategies. Burns of 5% or more of the body surface area must be reported to the State Fire Marshal by the attending physician or medical treatment facility. The goal of the burn registry is to detect arsonists who may injure themselves while setting the fire and then seek medical treatment far away from the crime scene to avoid detection. However the leading cause of burns is scalds and the largest burn injury problem is hot liquid scalds to children under the age of five. ♦

New Topical Fire Research Series Studies

The National Fire Data Center's has several new topical research reports.

- Construction Site Fires
- Fire Station Fires
- Firefighter Injuries in Structures
- Landfill Fires
- Multiple-Fatality Fires
- Residential Structure Fires on Agricultural Properties
- School Fires
- Smoke Alarm Performance in Residential Structure Fires.

These are available "on-line" at www.usfa.fema.gov/nfdc/tfrs.htm. ♦

Marine Fueling Permits

Marine Fueling Permits expired on December 31, 2001. Any marina that was previously issued a permit by the Office of the State Fire Marshal was mailed a renewal application. These renewals require a sign-off by the local fire chief or his designee. The sign-off indicates that the marine fueling facility is in compliance with 527 CMR 15. If you have any questions, please contact the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit at 978/567-3300 or in western Massachusetts, 413/587-3181. ♦

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION

FPW 2002 Theme is *Team Up for Fire Safety*

Fire Prevention Week will be October 6-12, 2002. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has announced the 2002 theme *Team Up for Fire Safety*. This year's theme will focus on installing and testing smoke alarms, practicing home escape plans and hunting for home hazards. ♦

Arson Watch Reward Program's 20th Annual Poster Contest

The theme for this year's poster contest is *Recognizing Real Fire Risks at Home*. This year's theme is designed to focus the public's attention on what each of us can do to make our surroundings safer from fire. The poster contest is for all 5th-8th graders in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday, April 10, 2002. Judging will take place on April 24 and the Massachusetts winners, their teachers and fire chiefs will be recognized at an awards luncheon on May 30. For information on the contest rules, please contact Nancy Rodes, Mass. Property Insurance Underwriting Association (aka the FAIR Plan) at (617) 557-5535. ♦

Candle Safety Awareness Day at the State House

At a December 7, 2001 State House event, Secretary Jajuga, representatives from Massachusetts candle companies and students from the Nathaniel Morton Elementary School celebrated *Candle Safety Awareness Day*. It was the culmination of the fall's education campaign. Four Massachusetts candle companies that have adopted the candle circle of safety logo into its consumer education materials — Yankee Candle, Illuminations, Colonial Candle of Cape Cod and



Children from the Nathaniel Morton School, Plymouth at the State House event with their teacher Wendy Luongo

PartyLites — were honored by Secretary Jajuga, State Fire Marshal Coan and fire service leaders.

Candle Safety Awareness Events

The first event kicked off not only the candle fire safety initiative, but also Fire Prevention Week, on October 7 at Colonial Candle of Cape Cod. October is the beginning of the peak candle-buying season as well. At their main store in Hyannis, they hosted local firefighters with apparatus, the fire safety house and interactive and static displays on fire safety. Colonial provided free coloring books, stuffed animals, fire safety materials and partnered with a local restaurant to provide food and a local hardware store who gave away smoke alarms.

The second event occurred on October 27 at the South Deerfield flagship store of Yankee Candle Company. They have supported the State Fire Marshal's initiative by using the Candle Circle of Safety logo on in-store posters and



State Fire Marshal Coan & Yankee Candle's Susan Stockman

displays. Many local fire departments also participated in the day's festivities.

In November, Illuminations partnered with us at the Burlington Mall. Fire educators from area departments enjoyed interacting with holiday shoppers.

The Plymouth School and Fire Departments held their annual event to celebrate Candle Safety Awareness Day at the Nathaniel Morton Elementary School in Plymouth. PartyLite Corporation and the Department of Fire Services participated. PartyLite is one of the four Massachusetts candle companies that has adopted the candle circle of safety logo into its consumer education materials. Children at this school asked their state representative to file the bill that created Candle Safety Awareness Day. ♦

Window Stickers...Why We DON'T Use Them

By Michael A. Young, Plymouth Fire Department

Over the course of the past few years, during public fire prevention, safety exhibitions and apparatus demonstrations, people would approach the public fire and life safety education display table to inquire whether we had any "Tot Finder" stickers to distribute. On each occasion, I attempted to offer an explanation, in my own opinion, as to just why our department no longer supplied these items. I had never seen any written explanation for the decision not to purchase and supply the stickers, so I tried to rationalize, in my mind, the likely reasons, which led to the status quo. Following each discussion, I would make a mental note to, some day, put my thoughts down on paper. And, as happens to each one of us, other more pressing issues pushed the task to the bottom of my agenda. So, when I was asked just the other day, about "those stickers you put in the window, in case of a fire", I sat down at the computer keyboard, determined to, once and forever, put my response to paper. What follows are my personal opinions regarding the use of fire safety window stickers.

The use of window alert stickers to designate areas of a home or building where individuals sleep or spend the majority of their time seems to have decreased in recent years. When they were first introduced 30 years ago, "Tot Finder" and other forms of emergency notification stickers were meant to alert firefighters to the location of young occupants within a residence, who may be unable to self evacuate in the event of a fire or other emergency. The theory was that rescuers could save precious time by going straight to a room where a "Tot Finder" sticker was attached to a window instead of searching around in smoke-filled, unfamiliar surroundings looking for trapped victims. At the

time they were first developed, most people did not have any form of smoke detection equipment in their homes. When fires occurred, dense smoke or fire often trapped people, because they did not receive any early warning that would have enabled them to escape safely. Arriving firefighters encountered fires that had been burning for a while and were well involved. As is the case with most fire fatalities, the victims succumbed to the toxic effects of the smoke, before the heat and flames reached them. Why were these occupants who placed "rescuer alert decals" on their windows not rescued, but were instead found in buildings with "victim locator labels"? What would have saved them? The main problem was not that the firefighters didn't reach them in time, the problem was that they were exposed to the by-products of combustion too long. If they had evacuated the building before the fire developed and produced a poisonous atmosphere, they would have had a better chance at survival. The problem was that the technology of the time had not yet advanced to the point where every homeowner or occupant could afford smoke detectors. The stickers had another disadvantage, they tended to provide the resident with a false sense of security, the idea that they would be rescued if a fire occurred, simply by placing a sticker on a window pane. Early detection of the fire and evacuation from the building to a safe location were ideas that would not be stressed in residential fire protection for several years to come. Another flaw in the system was that there was no guarantee that at the time a fire broke out that the residents would be located in the room with the window decal. The possibility existed that a firefighter going directly to 'the room with the sticker' could by-pass a victim's true location within the structure, precluding the discovery of a victim and making a rescue. Only by performing a systematic search of the entire structure can we be sure that victims are not overlooked. Search and rescue tech-

niques have been greatly advanced with the introduction of thermal imaging equipment. Firefighters outfitted with thermal imaging cameras can "see" victims through smoke and proceed room to room much more rapidly during the primary search, giving trapped occupants precious extra seconds for survival. Of course if the home is equipped with a functional smoke detection system and the residents have a home escape plan that they practice several times yearly, the likelihood of becoming a victim is significantly decreased. Instead of passing out "false hope" we should focus our attention on educating the public to prevent fires; have operating smoke detectors in each room; formulate and conduct exit drills; and to be at their designated meeting place, a safe distance from their homes, prior to the arrival of the fire department.

Michael A. Young is Lieutenant in the Plymouth Fire Department with 24 years experience in the fire service. He also works in the Office of the State Fire Marshal as S.A.F.E. Program Coordinator. ♦

CT Public Education Conference April 26, 2002

The Connecticut Fire Academy will hold its annual Public Fire Education Conference on April 26, 2002. It will be held at the Ramada Plaza, Meriden, CT. For registration information contact: Russ Emons @ (860) 627-6363 ext. 414. ♦

Motor Vehicle Arson

Continued from page 19

vehicle to collect the insurance money because the vehicle was a "lemon".

Chelsea

On December 9, 2001, a 1997 Isuzu Rodeo was discovered burning behind a commercial building on Second St., Chelsea. As a result of an investigation by the Chelsea Fire Investigation Unit and State Police investigators assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, the 28-year old owner subsequently admitted to setting the fire. The man, who had a degree in biomedical engineering, stated that he torched the \$13,000 vehicle to collect insurance money so that he could go to England and marry his fiancée who was incarcerated there and soon to be released from an English Prison. He said that he had been unsuccessfully attempting to sell the vehicle for two months prior to deciding to burn it.

All three vehicle owners were charged with arson of a motor vehicle, attempting to defraud the insurance company, and filing false police reports.

Blackstone Fire-Theft Ring

The FIU Central Team investigated a suspicious car fire in the town of Blackstone. The investigation revealed subjects would steal motor vehicles in Rhode Island, then strip the car of its valuables, burn the car, and sell the valuables for drugs. While one trooper was examining this vehicle, the subjects actually returned to retrieve the items stripped from the vehicle that were hidden in the woods. Apparently they were too heavy to carry back to Rhode Island. Unfortunately for the car thieves, investigators had already located these items and were waiting for someone to return for them. The investigation led to one subject being charged for the fire and the stolen property.

Anyone contemplating the illegal act of burning a motor vehicle, should think

The **DFS Quarterly** is published every March, June, September, and December. If you have some newsworthy information to share with the fire service, you are welcome to submit articles to: Jennifer Mieth, Editor, DFS Quarterly, Dept. of Fire Services, P.O. Box 1025, Stow, MA 01775. (978) 567-3381 or Internet Address: Jennifer.Mieth@state.ma.us

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Thank you to Judy O'Brien for keen-eyed proofreading and elegant rewording.

twice. The State Police officers assigned to the Fire Investigation Unit take the crime of arson seriously and are quickly catching motor vehicle arsonists. ♦



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